

Mr. *Blackall's*
REASONS
For not Replying
TO A
BOOK
Lately Published,
ENTITLED,
AMYNTOR.

In a LETTER to a Friend.

L O N D O N,

Printed for *Walter Kettilby* at the Bishops-
head in *St. Paul's Church-yard*, 1699.

Blackall or Blackhall, Offspring

Sir,

BY your so much urging me to think of Writing somewhat by way of Answer to *Amyntor*, it seems to me that you have not yet read the Book, but only dipt here and there in it, and because you saw my Name frequently mentioned, think there must needs be something in the Book that bears hard upon me, and which I am concerned in Honor to make some Reply to.

I desire you therefore first, to read over the Book very carefully, (if you have not yet done it) and after that, to consider those Reasons which I shall now give you, why I have no thoughts at present of Writing any Answer to it; and then I make no doubt but you will be of my Mind, viz. That it is altogether needless for me, to give either my self, or the World any more trouble about this Matter.

In *Amyntor*, there is first a general Apology for Writing Lives, whether of good or bad Men. But in this part of the Book, from p. 1. to 11. you will see plainly I am not concerned.

The next part of it, from p. 11. to 81. was indeed occasioned by a Passage in my Sermon before the House of Commons; and therefore you with others, may think perhaps it lies on me to reply to it: But when you have read it over, I believe you will be of another Mind, because you will easily perceive that the Author and I are at last, well enough agreed in that Point wherein we seemed most to differ.

The Matter of Fact is this. He had said in the Life of *Milton*, that many *Supposititious Pieces under the Name of Christ and his Apostles, and other great Persons had been Published and Approved*, (by some I suppose he means, not by all) in the *Prison-mitre Times*: And to this Observation because (by my little Reading) I knew there was much of Truth in it, I made

no Exception. But he had said moreover, that *he doubted the Spuriousness of several more such Books was yet undiscovered, thro' the Remoteness of those Times, &c.* And this Passage I found fault with, as what proceeding from the Mouth of a Person in high Esteem (as I had heard) with some Men for his great Parts and Learning, might give occasion to them, and to others not so well read in Antiquity as they took him to be, to think that some of those Books which are received by the whole Christian Church, as Parts of Canonical Scripture, are of very uncertain Authority; (because, as I then said, I knew of no other Pieces under the Name of Christ and his Apostles, the Spuriousness whereof had not been discovered) and I charged him with Infidelity, if indeed he did doubt of the Authority of these Books; and with Immodesty, for so openly Affronting the holy Religion, Professed and Established among us, by declaring this his Doubt in Print.

But he says now, that I was mistaken
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in my Censure, because the Books which he means, viz. In this last Passage which I excepted against, as well as in the former; or else all that he Writes from p. 18. to p. 43. is nothing to me, nor to the Purpose) are, either some Books, the Spuriousness of most of which has been discovered many hundred Years ago, and which are few of them now extant; a large Catalogue whereof he has given us from p. 20. to p. 42, and it seems it was only my foolish Mistake to think that the word (yet) when he layes the Spuriousness of these Books is yet undiscovered, did refer to this present Year, whenas indeed it was meant by him to refer to some time many Years since past and gone; or else he meant the Books ascribed to certain Apostolick Men; particularly the Epistle of Barnabas, the Pastor of Hermes, the Epistle of Polycarpus to the Philippiaas, the first Epistle of Clemens Romanus to the Corinthians, and the seven Epistles of Ignatius.

And I can't imagine now what you would have me reply to this; for whether he did mean these, and only these Books in that Passage which I excepted against, none can certainly tell but himself; if therefore he says he did' mean only these, and not the Books of the New Testament, how can I contradict him?

All that I could say to this, (if I had a mind to reply to this part of his Book) would be only to give the World the Reason that made me think, he meant not these only, but likewise some of the Books of the New Testament; which was this; that he having spoken before of *supposititious Pieces under the Name of Christ and his Apostles* as well as of other great Persons; it was very reasonable to think, that when immediately after, in the same Period, he speaks of *several more such Books*, the puriousness of which is not yet discovered, he had meant by *several*, some at least, of all the sorts before mentioned; that is, some under the Name of Christ, and some under the Name of his Apostles, as well

as some under the Name of other great Persons. For how should I know what he meant by *such Books*, but by looking back, and seeing what Books he had spoken of before? And finding that he had there spoken, not only of Books under the Name of other great Persons, but likewise *under the Name of Christ and his Apostles*, what could I understand by *such Books*, but some Books under the Name of Christ and his Apostles, as well as some under the Name of other great Persons? And if he did not mean so, or would not have been thought to have meant so; he ought, I think, to have distinguish'd and have made that Passage which I excepted against, an intire Sentence by its self; and have said plainly that tho' he thought some Books Spurious which some others believed to be Genuine they were only some pieces that had been ascribed to the other great Men, but not only of those that were read as Pieces of Christ or his Apostles; and if he had Written his Mind thus clearly, I should

no more have excepted against this Passage than I did against the former.

But he says, *If I had been disposed to deal ingenuously with him, I might have seen, without the help of the Fathers, (which he supposes I know nothing of) that he did not mean the Books of the New Testament, when he mentioned Supposititious Pieces under the Name of Christ, since there is none Ascribed to him in the whole Bible, nor do we read there, that he ever wrote any thing, except once with his Finger on the Ground, when he acquitted the Woman taken in Adultery.* But I wonder this should be urged by a Man that has so very lately written the Life of *John Milton*; for by the same Argument I might prove, that *Paradise lost*, and other late Pieces Ascribed by this Author, as well as others, to *John Milton*, are none of his, because 'tis certain they were not written by him; for how could he Write when he was blind? And if to this he should answer, as I suppose he would, that they may however, truly and properly enough, be said to be Pieces of

Milton, because they were Dictated, although not Written by himself; I see no Reason why our Saviours Sermon on the Mount, and his several other Sermons and Discourses which were utter'd and spoken by himself, tho' Recorded by the Evangelists, may not be Ascribed to him; and be said (in this Author's Phrase) to be Pieces under the Name of Christ. So that if this be the only Reason I had to think, that when he mentioned Pieces under the Name of Christ and his Apostles, and other great Men, he did not mean the Books of the New Testament; I think that since there are no Pieces now extant, that can in any sense be called Pieces under the Name of Christ and his Apostles, the Spuriousness whereof hath not been discovered, except only those which make up the New Testament, I had much better Reason to believe that he did mean these, or some of these. And in this Opinion I was the more confirmed, because I never (either before the 30th of January, or since) have

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met with so much as one single Person that did not understand that Passage in his Book in the same Sense that I did.

Whether therefore I did mistake and misrepresent his Meaning, is a Question that none but he himself, who best knew his own Meaning, can decide; but whether I mistook it (if indeed I did mistake it) without sufficient Ground from his own Expression, is another Question, which I could very willingly leave to be decided, by any indifferent Persons; nay, if I were to chuse the Judges, and could be well assured that they would speak their Minds freely, they should be those very Men that are his great Admirers, who I am persuaded would all with one Voice say that they understood him as I did; and that they look upon that Exposition which he has now given of that Passage, as little better than a Retraction of that bold Position which they thought he had before advanced, and for the sake of which, and of other such like impious Insinuations, in that and other Books, said to be-

Written by the same Author, (I fear) it is that they do chiefly admire him.

But whether I did misunderstand him, or no, and whether I had good reason to understand him as *I* did, or not, are private Questions, which only he and *I* are concerned in; and *I* think it foolish to trouble the rest of the World about them.

It is sufficient, that now at last we are agreed in the main Question, which is of more general Concern; for (unless *I* misunderstand him now as much as he says *I* did before) he now agrees with me, that the Books of the New Testament are Genuine, which was all *I* ever meant to contend for.

He therefore having declared, p. 42.
that in the first Member of that Passage in Milton's Life, by the Spurious Books published in the Primitive Times under the Name of Christ and his Apostles, and other great Men, he meant some of the Books mentioned in his Catalogue, p. 20.

&c.

&c. (in which Point I did ne-
 ver disagree with him) and that in
 the second member of that Passage (with
 which only it was that I found fault) *by the*
*several more, [*such Books] he meant the*
supposed Writings of certain Apostolical Men
(as they call them) Barnabas, Hermas, &c.
 About which the Learned World has
 been much devided, and probably will
 be, until greater Reason shall appear
 either wholly to reject them, as alto-
 gether Spurious, or wholly to receive
 them, as in all parts Genuine, than
 has yet been produced, either on the
 one side or the other: And he having
 moreover expressly granted, *that*
even those seven Pieces, 'as he calls
them) viz. The Epistle to the Hebrews,
the Epistle of James, the second of Peter,
the second and third of John, Jude, and
the Revelation, which were doubted by
some of the Ancients, are (not without
convincing Reasons) received by the Moderns;
 I have now no further Quarrel with
 him upon the account of this Passage;

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we are thus far fully agreed; may he always continue in the good Mind he seems now to be in. Only if *I* might be heard by him as a Friend, *I* would advise him, in the next Edition of *Milton's* Life, either so to alter the Expression of that Passage which *I* excepted against, that his meaning may not be so liable to be misunderstood; or else to add this Explanation which he now makes of it, in the Margin.

And now this great Difference being thus amicably composed; *I* don't see what Reason *I* (more than any one else) have to maintain a Dispute with him upon any other Account. For whereas *I* charged him with Confidence for asserting *King Charles the First's* Book, call'd *Icon Basilike*, to be spurious, without either producing any new Evidence for the Proof of his Assertion; or offering one word in Answer to those just and rational Exceptions, that had been made before to those only Testimonies, which he insists upon to prove it a Forgery; or making any

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Exceptions to those later Evidences that have been produced to prove it Authentick; The matter of Fact he does not deny, and whether the Charge was justly grounded on the Matter of Fact, the World will judge.

In this last Book indeed, he says, he will make amends for all former Omissions; and, I suppose, thinks has done it; but whether he has or not, I shall likewise leave the World to judge; because I do not think it proper for me, to take this Controversie out of another Man's Hands, who is better prepared, and better able to manage it than my self.

Only, because perhaps that worthy Person, (said by him and others to be Mr. Wagstaff,) may not think a formal Reply needful to that little, (that very little indeed) that is said in *Amyntor*, more than had been said before, to prove the Book Supposititious; I will just hint this one thing to you; (and upon Perusal of all that has been said

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on both sides, *I* believe you will find it true;) viz. that *Dr. Gauden* himself is the only Evidence that has yet appeared (and he, not in Person, but by his Friends, though in this *I* think no Friends to his Reputation or Memory) to prove himself the Author of that Book. For all that *Dr. Walker* says, is from *Dr. Gauden*; except only that he saw the Book under *Dr. Gauden's* Hand-writing; (which might be, and yet *Dr. Gauden* the Transcriber only, not the Author; according to what is said in *Mr. Le Pla's* Letter.) And all that *Mrs. Gauden* says, whether in the Fragments before published, or in the larger Narrative printed in *Amyntor*, is, as from her Husband, that is, from *Dr. Gauden* still. Nay, and even all that my Lord *Anglesea* testifies under his Hand, as told him by the *Royal Brothers*, (supposing the *Memorandum* to be my Lords Hand-writing, and that it contains a true Relation of what was told him by them;) and all that

that any other Persons, (though there be Five Hundred of them,) do or shall testify as by Hear-say from the *Royal Brothers*, is from Dr. *Gauden* still; it plainly appearing by the whole Story, and particularly by Mr. *North's Papers*, that both King *Charles* the Second, and his Brother did believe, or were thought to believe the Book to be their Fathers, till Dr. *Gauden*, in order to get a good Bishoprick for his good Services, told them otherwise. Dr. *Gauden's* Testimony bring therefore the single Evidence on that side: I leave it to you to consider, whether his manifest Interest in affirming this, and his Zeal in pursuing his Interest by this Report of his, being so very evident, they do not render his single Testimony liable to great Suspicion. And I leave it to all the World to consider, of what weight or Validity any Man's Testimony can be, especially when he testifies for his own Advantage, in case the Matter of his Testimony be such, that it can't be

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credited without allowing, that he (the Witness himself) has formerly been guilty of a most notorious Forgery, and consequently that he is not a credible Witness.

In the Conclusion of *Amyntor* the Author takes Occasion, from the Offence my Sermon has given him, to represent the great inconveniencies that have happened by the Observation of the 30th. of *January*, and by the Sermons that have been preached upon that Day; and you may expect perhaps that I should say something to this; but I don't think it either needful or convenient; because I judge this to be a Matter more proper to be debated in *Parliament* then by private Persons.

But there is one thing noted in this *Conclusion*, which perhaps you may think lies upon me, more then any one else, to defend, viz. That speaking of K. CHARLES I. in my Sermon, I should say, *the best of Kings, and the best of Men*; which Expression he saies several were

were angry at ; especially because I did not except the present King ; (and he might have added, that 'twas a greater Fault in me than it would been in another, because I Write my self *Chaplain to His Majesty*) But the Author, I think, does not say he himself was offended at this Expression ; and I suppose those several, (if indeed there were any that, upon this Account only were angry at it,) were only such, as not only have not been conversant in ancient Authors, but are not yet so far read, even in their Testament, as to the beginning of St. *Luke's* Gospel, where v. 3. he stiles *Theophilus*, most excellent ; by which, I suppose few, even of these beginners to read, do think that St. *Luke* meant to make a Comparison between him other excellent Persons, and much less to prefer *Theophilus* before all other Men, the Holy Apostles of our Lord not excepted. And therefore this being so manifestly invidious eavil, I think needs

no Answer; especially when in the Sermon it self, tho' I commended *K. Charles I.* for his Virtues, I did allow that he had Faults; But the Faults that were then, and have since been charged upon him, being only such as he might be, and I believe was led into by Misinformation, and a mistake of the extent of his Power and Prerogative, I said they were only such as were consistent with Integrity of Mind; and such Faults as these I think can hardly be called Vices and Immoralities.

And Now, Sir, I hope you are satisfied, that I have no Reason, more than any other Man, to engage my self in a further Controversie with *J. T.* the Author of *Milton's Life*; for as to the Reflections which he has in several places of *Amputor*, (almost in every Page) made upon me; particularly, as to the meanness of my Parts, and my great want of Learning; I value them not; let the World believe of me as it pleases.

pleases. Or if *I* was minded to make any Answer to these parts of his Book, it should be only this; That my Natural Parts are such as God was pleased to give me, to which *I* can no more add than to my Stature; however, such as they are, *I* am contented with them, and thankful for them: And that my Learning is as much, as by moderate Study, with such Parts, *I* have been able to attain. And to this perhaps, *I* should subjoyn a Prayer, in which *I* make no doubt *J. T.* would think himself included (as well as he is thought by some to be, in the Prayer for *Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Hereticks*) viz. That they who have better Parts, and more Learning, may use and improve them to the Glory of him that gave them; and do more good in the World than *I* am able to do.

These Reasons for my not Writing in Answer to *Amyntor*, if they satisfy you, you may please to communicate,

as

as you have Opportunity, to any other
of my Friends, whom you shall find
to have the same Expectation from
me that you had, by doing which,
you will oblige,

Sir,

April 11, 1699.

*Your most Affectionate Friend,
and Humble Servant.*

Ofsp. Blackall,

ERRATA.

VIZ. l. 10. r. Hermas, p. 5. l. 22. dele by,
p. 6. l. 23. for only r. any, for read r.
received, p. 11. l. 7. r. Hermas, l. 9. r. divided,
l. 17. r. (as, p. 17. l. 19. r. him and other, l. ult.
r. an invidious Cavil, p. 15. l. 9. for bring r.
being.

BOOKS Printed for Walter Kettilby at
the Bishops-head in St. Paul's Church-yard.

A Sermon Preached before the Honourable
House of Commons at St. Margaret's
Westminster, Jan. 30th. 169th by Offspring Blackall,
Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty.

Great Men's Advantages and Obligations to
Religion, Represented in a Sermon Preached be-
fore the King in the Chappel in St. James's July
17, 1698.

A Sermon Preached at the Assizes held for the
County of Surry, at Kingston upon Thames,
March 30, 1699. These two by Henry Hesketh,
rector of Charlwood, and Chaplain in Ordinary
to His Majesty.

A false Faith not Justified by Care for the
Poor; prov'd in a Sermon Preach'd at St. Paul's
Church, August 28, 1698.

Mysteries in Religion Vindicated, or the Fi-
liation, Deity and Satisfaction of our Saviour,
asserted against Socinians, and others. with Oc-
casional Reflections on several late Pamphlets:
These two by Luke Milbourn a Presbiter of the
Church of England.

A Sermon Preached before the Right Honou-
rable the Lord Mayor, the Aldermen, and Go-
vernours

vernours of the several Hospitals of the City of London, at St. Bridges's Church, on *Wed: 1st day in Easter Week, 1698*, being one of the Anniversary *Spittle* Sermons; by *Thomas Lynford, D. D.* and Chaplain in Ordinary to His Majesty.

A Sermon preached at the Anniversary Meeting of the Gentlemen Educated at St. Paul's School, *Jan. 25, 169ⁿ*. Published at the Request of the Stewards, by *John Pulleyn A. M.* and Prebendary of St. Paul's.

An Answer to an Heretical Book, called, *The Naked Gospel*, which was condemn'd and ordered to be publickly burnt by the Convocation of the University of Oxford, *Aug. 19, 1690*, with some Reflections on Dr. Bury's New Edition of that Book; to which is added a short History of Socinianism, by *W. Nichols, D. D.*